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in mind when they founded the colony of Bahia.

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Already enough was known of Brazil to hope that sugar cane would do well in it. The hot and humid climate of its coast would be highly favorable, and as for hands for work, they counted mainly on the indigenous people who, as we have seen, were relatively numerous and peaceful on the coast. These perspectives were completely confirmed; the one factor of which they were ignorant before the attempt--the quality of the soil--revealed itself as supremely propitious, at some points at least, on the extensive coast. This was particularly the case in the extreme northeast, on the coastal plain occupied by the state of Pernambuco and on the contours of the Baía de Todos os Santos (the Recôncavo Baiano, as it would be called). These were not the only ones: in a general way all the Brazilian coast paid homage to sugar cane.

It was on this base that the effective occupation and colonization of Brazil was initiated.

By the end of the sixteenth century sugar cane cultivation had spread at least as far as its present western and southern limits in the Recôncavo, on the Paraguaçu and Jaguaripe rivers. Forty engenhos were engaged in the production of sugar.⁸ The engenhos were the nuclei of

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the economic organization of the colony. The cultivation of sugar cane and the milling of sugar demanded a labor force too large to be recruited from among the indigenous Indians.⁹ This labor force was supplied from the slave pens of Africa--chiefly on the Guinea Coast

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and in Angola. The city of Salvador, which had the advantage of a commodious port and a central location among the slave markets of Brazil, was the chief point of debarkation for these Africans.¹⁰

Estimates of the number of slaves imported and the number who remained in Bahia vary over a wide range. In 1583, when the population of Brazil was estimated at 57,000 people, 25,000 were listed as whites, 18,000 as civilized Indians, and 14,000 as Negro slaves. The Negroes

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were concentrated mainly in Bahia and Pernambuco.¹¹ It seems likely that in Bahia the number of Negroes was at least equal to the number of whites. These two racial groups and their mixed-blood derivatives

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The other urban centers of the Recôncavo:

	1950 Population
633 [162] [443]	Maragogipe 9,744
	Muritiba 7,452
	Crus das Almas 6,758
	São Gonçalo 3,771

[279] are all local trade and cigar manufacturing centers. Maragogipe is a
[504] port of minor importance.³⁷ The other urban centers have inland loca-
[361] tions, near the inner edge of the Crystalline Uplands.³⁸

Near the Recôncavo are four urban centers which have minor but appreciable effect upon its agricultural economy:

	1950 Population
[162]	Santo Antônio de Jesus 11,417
	Nazaré 11,215
	Castro Alves 6,479
	Serrinha 4,602

Santo Antônio de Jesus and Nazaré are located along the southern periphery of the Recôncavo, and Castro Alves and Serrinha on the south-western and northwestern periphery, respectively. All these centers
[496] are on one of Bahia's two main railroads, both of which terminate at the Bay—at Salvador or at São Roque do Paraguaçu.³⁹

633 In 1950 the nine major urban centers of the Recôncavo had
464 100,000 to 120,000 workers in industry, transportation, and merchan-
433 dising.⁴⁰ In all cities of the Recôncavo, except Salvador, the
[162] industrial workers almost exclusively were engaged in processing

agricultural products--in sugar refining, cigar manufacturing, and
[123] slaughtering. Except for some of the animals slaughtered in Feira de
[241] Santana and the poorer grades of tobacco brought in from the sertão, these agricultural products originate in the Recôncavo.

The industrial structure of Salvador is more complex. It processes agricultural products from the Recôncavo, but also from other parts of the state, notably cacão. There is a small textile industry. It is probable that the majority of the industrial workers are employed in numerous small service industries which supply Salvador

505 The others, barefoot, wearing shorts
[291] and large-brimmed straw hats, are the permanent dwellers of
505 the islands: fishermen, stevedores, and storekeepers.
133 When the islands are left behind, the scene begins to change.
[501] The color of the water changes from a clear, deep blue to a
[226] muddy gray. Groups of canoes are seen, their occupants busy
[361] with their fish nets, for this shallow part of the bay is a good
[162] fishing ground. Once again the mainland is close, rolling hills
[368] covered with a thousand shades of green--sugar cane, the
[504] crop which nearly four hundred years ago replaced the virgin
[361] forests. The deltalike shores of this part of the bay are cov-
505 ered with mangue, muddy areas with low-growing trees which
512 at high tide are standing in the water. On a hill at the water's
361 edge is the town of Vila Recôncavo, a town of 1,462 persons.
344 The first thing one sees is the huge Franciscan convent⁵ with
its two tall towers and its royal palms. Approaching the long
dock which juts out into the water, one can see almost the
whole town, which is built on three hills and in the valleys
between them.

The arrival of the boat from Salvador every other day is an
event in an otherwise dull day. Nearly all the men of the town
go down to the dock to meet the boat, to see who is traveling,
to see what is arriving for someone in the town, to receive
messages or parcels, to greet friends, and to gossip. The
postmistress is there, and with her the man whose duty it is
to carry the mail sack, but who has a helper to do it for him.
After a few minutes the boat continues its journey, and the
townsfolk walk back along the dock, breaking up into small
groups on reaching the main square and then each going his
own way.

On the square at the end of the dock, at the foot of the
main street which leads up the middle hill and out into the

[128] 5. It should be explained that "convent" in this case is a
direct translation from Portuguese. In Portuguese, convent
does not have the connotation of being a religious establish-
ment only for women. The word convento is applied to the
Franciscans' establishment because the Franciscans are not
monks; if they were, their establishment would be called a
mosteiro (monastery). In English, Franciscans are known as
"friars," and their houses are called "friaries." However,
throughout this monograph the direct translation, convent, is
used.

VILA RECÔNCAVO

438 Centro, situated on the banks of a navigable river which
 175 empties into the Bay in front of the town of Vila Recôncavo,
 361 was in a good position to serve the entire back region of the
 {634} Recôncavo. As a county it now comprises 1,180 square kilo-
 {131} meters. As a port, Centro served two purposes in the early
 • {504} eighteenth century. A great deal of produce and many persons
 passed through it, including the families of sugar-cane grow-
 {487} ers from other regions of the Recôncavo; and it also served
 {634} as a "gateway to the West" at a time when western Bahia and
 Minas Gerais were being opened and the gold and diamond
 rushes were in progress. Centro was the end of navigable
 waters and the beginning of one of the overland routes lead-
 ing to the uplands of the sertão and the mining areas of the
 west. As Centro grew, Vila Recôncavo stagnated. In 1833
 Centro was made judicial center (cabeça de comarca) of the
 district and Vila Recôncavo became part of this judicial dis-
 trict, thereby losing its prominence as the center of juris-
 diction for the interior zone of the Recôncavo. Commercially,
 Vila Recôncavo was soon overshadowed by Centro. In 1802,
 Vilhena wrote:

... In Centro there is a great deal of commerce,
 because of the amount of sugar, tobacco, and the num-
 ber of distilleries and of Mineiros [miners and people
 from the state of Minas Gerais] who arrive there. Con-
 tinuing along the bank of the river one finds Vila Re-
 côncavo, which in spite of enough sugar passing through
 it, always had a weak commerce, and the town is known
 among all the others as the town of the least traffic.⁸

He says later:

175 In spite of its antiquity, Vila Recôncavo has few in-
 361 habitants, and most of them poor, although through-
 438 out the termo there are many good families of noble
 433 people, rich through the products of their large engen-
 hos, from which they take much and excellent sugar,
 the only commerce of that town; in it also there is fish-
 ing for a little sardinelike fish called xangô and a large
 quantity of good and large shrimp, which is the main

8. Ibid., Letter I, p. 32 (author's translation).

VILA RECÔNCAVO



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Pulling in
the deep net.



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Waiting for the
arrival of the boat

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In the very large

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usinas, the mill hands and even the field hands are modern industrial workers. They are employees of a large industrial corporation and are protected at least theoretically by the labour laws of the nation. The highly personalized relationship between the plantation workers and the owner-administrator of his own plantation, which persisted from the slave era, has been replaced on the larger *usinas* by the impersonal employee-employer relationship of the modern industrial age. Today, modern plantations and small towns have electricity; there is modern housing for workmen; the State and even the sugar companies provide medical aid; there are primary schools both in the small towns and on many plantations; recreation facilities are found in the towns and provided by the *usinas*; and the sugar-cane experimental station situated in the area constantly urges fertilization of the land and modern techniques and methods of sugar-cane production. But the older and more traditional patterns exist side by side with the new, and each of them influences the relations among the racial groups of the zone.

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III. Vila Recôncavo is a small town on the Bay of All Saints. The rural area around it, which lies within the social and economic orbit of the town and which is the unit under consideration, comprises some 80 square kilometres, or slightly less than half the entire area of the county of which the town of Vila Recôncavo is the county seat.¹

It is in this area that there are 14 plantations, three of which nowadays plant very little sugar cane. Parts of the town itself are built on the land of one of these plantations, and the rest of the town area is owned in small lots by private individuals or by the Church. Although Vila Recôncavo is the county seat, local government is the only important function which it fulfils for the surrounding area. It is not used as a shipping point, either for receiving supplies from the outside or for sending sugar to the outside. *Braços do mar*, or inlets of the bay, go to many of the plantations and are deep enough for the *sauzeiros* (shallow draft sailboats) used on the bay for transport. Many of the plantations have direct connexion with Salvador. Commerce in Vila Recôncavo is almost entirely limited to supplying the 1,462 inhabitants of the town and of some small islands and of one community near by which is not devoted to sugar production. It is not the major supply source even for these groups which live near enough to another and far larger commercial centre where they prefer to do their marketing. The *prefeito* or mayor of the county is rarely a resident of the town itself. Rather he is usually a planter of the surrounding area. He goes into town to do municipal business,

¹ Both the town and the county bear the name of Vila Recôncavo.

[City of Salvador]

NEGROES IN BRAZIL

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563 races, and the ensuing termination is perhaps most clearly discernible.

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[132] Bahia lies in the tropics of the Southern Hemisphere, approximately thirteen degrees south of the Equator, her naturally warm and humid climate almost constantly tempered by the refreshing Southeast Trades. Located seven hundred miles above Rio de Janeiro, the Brazilian capital, and four hundred miles below the old sugar center of Pernambuco, Bahia marks approximately the mid-point of Brazil's four thousand miles of coast line which stretches from temperate Uruguay to the torrid Guianas. Some twenty-five hundred miles to the northeast lie the Gold and Slave coasts of Africa, once the home of the parents or grandparents of many present-day Bahians; directly to the east is Angola, another important source of the city's population.

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• [504] In 1949 Bahia will celebrate her four hundredth anniversary. As cities go in the New World, she is an old city; in fact, one of the very oldest. Permanently founded fifty-eight years before Jamestown and thirty-five years earlier than St. Augustine, this outpost of Portuguese civilization was one of the world's richest ports long before New York had outgrown her swaddling clothes.

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* 563 Here, shortly after 1500, set in the Portuguese transplantation, at first composed of adventurers, shipwrecked and deserting sailors; *degredados* banished from Portugal for criminal, political, or religious offenses; ambitious young men chosen for physical fitness and freedom from marital ties to serve in the colonial garrison; impoverished nobles seeking to recuperate fortunes squandered at the Portuguese court; a few officials, Jesuits, and secular clergy; Jews expelled by the Inquisition (who incidentally were to furnish a considerable portion of the much-needed capital for the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 6]

[City of Salvador]

10 NEGROES IN BRAZIL

36 In the lower city lies, of course,
• [504] the port, with its customs, warehouses, shipping and consular offices, banks, the marine arsenal, the post office, the Association of Commerce, the principal public market, jewelry shops, hardware and cigar stores, and most of the men's shops of the city. Up on the promontory and extending out toward the suburbs are the public buildings and most of the churches, the convents and monasteries, hotels and movie theaters, the public library, museums, professional schools, primary and secondary institutions, hospitals, women's shops, photographic galleries, furniture and dry-goods stores, confectionary stalls, the "five and tens," physicians' and dentists' offices, clubs, the principal parks and *praças*, and the residential areas of the city.

131 Bahia the city is the economic and political capital of Bahia the state, whose area of 342,000 square miles makes
133 it considerably larger than Texas. The region is composed in large part of a vast plain of gneiss formation which rises abruptly from the comparatively narrow coastal belt to heights varying from 600 to 1,200 feet in the interior.

(135) Upon this plateau and running north and south across the central portion of the state lie a series of low mountains composed principally of sedimentary rock, sandstone, or conglomerates and containing such minerals as iron, manganese, copper, lead, gold, and diamonds (including the black *carbonado* so essential for tool-cutting). This mountain
132 barrier acts as a valuable condenser, gathering moisture for
133 a land which otherwise might be virtually desert. In the extreme western part of the state the plateau is composed of sandstone overlying limestone, and thus it provides a natural sponge which assures perennial rivers in a region where light rains and near drought alternate in six-month periods.